

DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is in response to the application filed on 3/8/2010, the supplemental amendment filed on 5/14/2010. Accordingly, the previous claim rejections and objections are been withdrawn.

Claims 21-24, 30-33, 35-37 are pending in this application.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. After a thorough examination, search, discussions of the present application, and in light of the prior art made of records, claims 21-24, 30-33, 35-37 (renumbered as 1-11) are allowed.

Reasons for Allowance

3. The claimed invention is directed to a search system and method for providing popularity rank of search keyword with search result according to the category to which the keyword belongs to.

The closest prior art reference Chandrasekar et al. (Patent No. US 6,978,264 B2), hereinafter Chandrasekar, discloses in the same filed of invention, a search service system and method (*Col. 3, lines 11-14*). Chandrasekar discloses the system comprising at least one memory having program instructions and databases (*Fig 1 & 11*), the databases comprising: a category classification database including at least one representative category associated with one or more predetermined keyword groups (*Col. 3, lines 31-35, Col. 8, lines 13-15 & 61-62*), each of the predetermined keyword groups including one or more representative keywords and other keywords associated with the respective representative keywords (*Col. 7, lines 50-59, Col.*

Art Unit: 2168

8, lines 56-60, Col. 9, lines 4-8), a keyword database including at least one predetermined keyword group and data indicative of a number of searches made using one or more representative keywords or other keywords associated with the respective representative keywords (Col. 12, lines 46-48, Col. 13, lines 5-10), each of the representative keywords representing the other keywords associated with the representative keyword, which convey a same or similar meaning (Col. 9, lines 42-54);

means for receiving a selection of a representative category associated with a predetermined keyword group from a manager wherein the selection is made to reflect current societal interest by the manager (Col. 3, lines 62-67);

means for associating a representative keyword included in a first keyword group associated with a first representative category, with a second keyword group associated with a second representative category based on the selection of the manager (Col. 3, lines 45-55);

means for receiving a search request from a user terminal through a communication network, the search request including a search keyword (Col. 15, line 60);

a first search unit for searching the category classification database for a representative category associated with the first keyword group including the search keyword (Col. 3, lines 50-54, Col. 16, lines 4-8), the first search unit determining the second keyword group related to the first keyword group by referring to the category classification database, wherein the second keyword group including the first keyword group (Col. 3, lines 30-40, Col. 7, lines 45-60, Fig 2);

a second search unit for searching the keyword database for the second keyword group and data indicative of a number of searches made using one or more representative keywords or

Art Unit: 2168

other keywords included in the second keyword group (*Col. 12, lines 41-55, Col. 13, lines 66-67, Col. 15, lines 34-36*).

means for providing the user terminal with information showing keyword search results so that a display of the user terminal displays the information showing keyword search results, the information showing popularity being related to the search request based, at least in part, upon the data indicative of the respective number of searches made using the respective representative keywords or other keywords included in the second keyword group user (*Col. 3, lines 62-63, Fig 8A*);

means for updating the data indicative of a number of searches made using a representative keyword corresponding to the search keyword or other keywords of the second keyword group in response to the search request from the user terminal, means for updating the data indicative of a number of searches made using a representative keyword corresponding to the search keyword or other keywords of the second keyword group in response to the search request from the user terminal, wherein the means for the updating the data adds a number of searches made using keywords represented by a first representative keyword to a number of searches made using the first representative keyword, where the first representative keyword and said keywords convey a same or similar meaning, wherein the first representative keyword is related to the search keyword (*Col. 12, lines 62-67*).

However, Chandrasekar fails to disclose or render obvious the features of computing input order of keywords included in the first keyword group by using the second keyword group to compute a popularity rank of the keywords, and providing information showing popularity of keywords together with keyword search results so that a display of the user terminal displays the

Art Unit: 2168

information showing popularity together with the keyword search results. These features are “computing input order of keywords...user terminal displays the information showing popularity together with the keyword search result” as recited in independent claims 21, 30, and 35.

Thus, the reasons for allowance are computing popularity rank of keyword included in the first keyword group using the second keyword group and displaying popularity of keywords together with search results in a specific way as described in the claims.

The dependent claims, being definite, further limiting, and fully enabled by the specification and are also allowed.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MICHELLE OWYANG whose telephone number is (571)270-1254. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (Alternate Fridays Off): 8am-5pm EST.

Art Unit: 2168

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, TIM VO can be reached on 571-272-3642. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Tim T. Vo/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit
2168

/M. O./
Examiner, Art Unit 2168